

SUSAN ABULHAWA

132 Pennsylvania Ave, Yardley, PA 19067 | 267.391.5386 | sjabulhawa@yahoo.com

November 1, 2020

Recipient

Title

Company

Street Address

City, ST ZIP Code

To The Honorable Judge •

Please accept this letter as a plea for your favorable consideration of Mr Anthony Smith's request for bail.

I have known Anthony, or "Ant" as he is affectionately called by his friends, since 2015, when I met him at a social gathering of friends in Upper Darby. We have had many interactions over the years since, including various community lectures, films, lawful street protests, social gatherings, and community organizing.

I have known Ant to be an honorable, kind, compassionate, intelligent, and curious human being. He is devoted and loyal to his friends, family, students, and community. His selflessness, empathy, and commitment to others is truly the best of humanity. Always even tempered, I've seen him defuse situations that could have easily gotten out of control when emotions run high. He is a natural educator and peace maker. He is patient and listens more than he speaks. I have seen firsthand how his students love and respect him, and in turn the lengths he goes to give them the best education he can.

A couple of years ago, Ant reached out to me to help him with a writing program for his students. The details of the project escape my memory (I am a woman of a certain age!) , but I recall feeling moved both by his desire to inspire young people, and by the beauty of his own writing.

There is no doubt in my mind that Ant is not a flight risk. He has strong roots in Philadelphia. In fact, this city is the only place he has truly known in all his young life, where he is deeply loved by his friends, family, students, and community. Further, Ant has a deep sense of justice and

fairness, which I believe translates into a natural impulse to clear his name in court against the charges brought against him.

about me: I am a novelist, poet, biologist, mother, lecturer, and advocate for human and animal rights. I've written three international bestselling novels. I am best known for my debut novel, *Mornings in Jenin* (Bloombusry, 2010), which was translated into 30 languages, and is considered a classic in Anglophile Arab literature. I am the founder of an all-volunteer children's non-profit organization that builds playgrounds for refugees and traumatized children abroad; co-chair of a literature festival; and member of several professional organizations, including PEN International. I have traveled and given lectures all over the world—throughout Africa, Europe, South America, Asia, and the Middle East.

Sincerely,

susan abulhawa

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To whom it may concern,

Patient, considerate, and giving are the words that come to mind when I think of Anthony Smith. His genuine and gentle soul leaves a memorable impression. He gravitates positivity and is known and loved for it. He passionately spreads knowledge with ease; Every conversation with him has a positive take away. He's always putting others before himself and he's been that way for the past 14 years that I've known him. Anthony's always had a caring heart, and I'm in awe of his ability to really make a difference in so many lives yet remain a humble spirit.

Sincerely,

Melissa Bailey

Dear Mr. Ant judge,

I know you're only doing your job but I'm just here to let you know that you have the wrong person. Mr. Ant is the nicest person in the world and i might not know a lot about him but what i do know is that he's a loving person and would never hurt anybody or anything. He's the best teacher anybody could ask for , he always put his students first not just his students but everybody. Please let him come home. We miss and need him.

Tlmira Barlow (slides)

HERITAGE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

November 2, 2020

To Whom It May Concern,

With pleasure, I offer reference for Anthony Smith, who increasingly has gained my respect and admiration over the years. His attentiveness and interactions with children, youth and elders, especially, are a joy to witness. Countless needy families and individuals alike have benefitted from Mr. Smith's humanitarian spirit, for he has long given generously of his time, talents and treasures in service to others. Such a valuable force for good is greatly needed within our urban communities today.

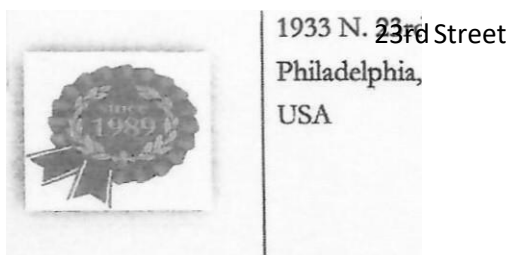
I anticipate conferring with Anthony Smith further regarding youth entrepreneurial options as we expose youth to the world of work and business enterprises. His insights as an educator and youth advocate enhance planning because of his innate ability to relate to youth. His proficiency, professionalism and resourcefulness are commendable. Pictured below is a gift that I look forward to giving him soon.

This reference for Anthony Smith is presented with confidence and appreciation for his upstanding character. Should you wish to contact me, I may be reached using the information below.

Best Regards,



Ruth I. Birchett
Founder



PA

Sarah

19121-2024PHONE 215-769-5899

FAX 215-769-5899

EMAIL heHtagcdcorp@gmail.com

Bixby

Prospect St.

Granville, NY 12832

11/02/20

RE: Anthony Smith

Your Honor,

I am writing to you regarding the character of Anthony Smith. Anthony and I went to college together at Arcadia University from 2010-2014, both of us graphic design majors enrolled in many of the same courses over those four years.

In every stage of schooling, there is always that one classmate that stands out because they seem to be friends with everyone in the class. Somehow, someway, that person goes above and beyond to make you feel like you are important, that how your day is going matters, and that the work you are doing is worthwhile. That person for our class, was Anthony. He was seemingly friends with everyone, not only the design students but the rest of our class as well. As an introvert, I was always in awe that he found the time and energy and brain capacity to remember so much information about so many people. He was always such a positive force on campus, greeting you with a smile and asking you about that obscure show you are watching that you mentioned to him one-time weeks ago.

Everyone in our class would tell you the same thing; Anthony is a selfless, passionate, radiant, kind, gentle, absolute light force of a human being. The city of Philadelphia is beyond lucky to have him as a resident, as an advocate, and as a leader.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Sarah

Ethan Blackmore

153 Winthrop Parkway

Revere MA 02151

Oct 31st, 2020

Your Honor,

I attended Arcadia University with Anthony Smith for a number of years. We shared many classes together, including our final thesis presentations. More than just a fellow student, he was a good friend. I understand that there is a serious case involving Ant, and for this reason I feel compelled to tell you of his character.

Ant has always been diligent, hard-working, and outstandingly kind. We spent many late nights in the design lab working and conversing. When other students would struggle, he was quick to offer his time and assistance despite how much he had on his plate. Whether for new students he had never met, or friends he had been attending classes with for years.

He was gentle and kind in a way that we all greatly appreciated. He was unwavering in his commitment to help others and make the world a better place through education and communication. He cared deeply about peacefully conveying messages, and helping others learn to listen.

After university, he has continued this. He has spent countless hours volunteering, dedicating much of his life to helping those less fortunate than him. His kindness is unparalleled, and I find the idea that he could harm anyone or anything impossible. He is, without a doubt, one of the greatest men I have ever known.

My hope is that you will consider my words, and those of many others who write on behalf of him and see that so many could not have erred in their assessment of his character.

Best wishes,

Ethan Blackmore.

Ellen Bryer
419 S 49th st
Philadelphia, PA 19143

November 3, 2020

RE: Anthony Smith

Your Honor,

I had the pleasure of serving in Americorps with Anthony Smith for about six months in the 2015-2016 school year. Since then, I have been aware of the accolades he has received for his community service and activism in the West Philadelphia neighborhood. Though we have not reconnected in person since our service ended, I know Anthony to be a talented educator. Anthony quietly modeled to students, and to his colleagues, what it could look like to stay and invest in the city you grew up in. He is truly a gifted communicator as well as a reliable and immensely trustworthy colleague and mentor. Anthony worked tirelessly to help our students. I remember multiple occasions where Anthony sat with students for hours and hours working on a job application, college essay, or schoolwork, long after I would have said, "You know what? Let's call it a day and try again tomorrow." I admired, and still admire, Anthony for his boundless energy and passion for helping others.

I am saddened by the charges facing Anthony and hope this letter can serve as a character reference in support of his release. Please let me know if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,
Ellen Bryer

Janielle Bryan
4524 Springfield Ave, IF
Philadelphia PA 19143

Dear Respected Authorities,

My name is Janielle Bryan and I've known Anthony Smith as a friend and organizer since March 2017. During this time, I've had the privilege of getting to know him well. I understand the seriousness of the matter and would like to give my perspective of the person I call my friend.

Listing off the community leadership roles or jobs Anthony has held only provides a glimpse of the work he has done. To understand the breadth of his impact, talk to the people whose lives he's touched. Students, friends, family, and community members can attest to his selfless commitment to their betterment. Whether it's teaching or distributing resources, Anthony has shown up countless times for others when they needed it the most. Through his work he pours love back into the city of Philadelphia and it's citizens - in actions big and small.

As a medical school professor, I've been entrusted to teach the next generation of doctors how to use self efficacy. This is the ability to inspire a person's belief in themselves and their ability to succeed. I believe that this is Anthony's greatest gift. He encourages Philadelphians to want more for themselves and their community. To dream bigger than what they've been told is attainable. In a city with 25% of the population living below the poverty line this is no easy feat. Yet, this is his life's work.

He advocates for communities that have been historically overlooked, underserved, and underfunded. His work inspires community members to strive for more. Not because he told them it's possible, but instead he has shown them how. By leading by example, Anthony's infectious passion and proven track record inspires others. His gift of unwavering empathy isn't something I can teach in my classroom.

When he says, "No one gets left behind", this isn't a slogan, but a genuine promise. One that he has dedicated his life to keeping and should have the freedom to keep doing so.

Sincerely,
Janielle Bryan
Sarah Burgess
1008 South 45th Street Apt. 1
Philadelphia, PA 19104

To Whom It May Concern:

I feel an urgent need to communicate to you what an inspiring, dedicated and beloved person Anthony Smith is, and his positive impact on those around him. I understand that he faces criminal charges, which in my estimation as his direct supervisor at YouthBuild, are entirely out of alignment with his outstanding character.

From the moment Ant joined the YB community, he built strong relationships with staff and students, and he dove into the work of inspiring students to engage in their communities and contribute to change. After a two year stint as a Community Projects Coordinator, he became our social studies teacher. The decision to hire him in this role was obvious: he clearly loved engaging with our young people; it was equally clear our young people loved and learned from engaging with him.

With his content, Ant has shown that his goal is to empower students to understand perspectives, to develop their own narratives, and to advocate for change based on what they know. He does not impose his beliefs. In the curriculum he is teaching right now, he asks students to explore an issue they care about, to develop an advocacy statement, to research pros and cons, and to reconsider their argument after seeing these pros and cons before finalizing their position.

At his core, it is clear to me that Ant cares deeply about people, and about community. He individually greets everyone who enters his classroom or who passes him in the hallway. In our community spaces he is always saying "Let's go!" to a student who is presenting, clapping enthusiastically and encouraging students to share their voices. He is not interested in the spotlight. He is interested in the wellbeing of a community. Through him, I have learned to ask questions like, how does it feel in the room; is everyone getting what they need?

Ant celebrated a birthday on a Wednesday early this October. Our school was engaged in a block clean-up that afternoon and he was out there in the mix. When I asked him about it later, he didn't share that it was his birthday, but he did share, with excitement in his voice, that he was able to meet one of our English Language Learner students in person for the first time. He is always looking to connect, to support, to lift up.

Ant is an invaluable member of our community. I hope I have conveyed how incongruent the charges leveled at him are with the gift he is to those around him.

Sincerely,

Sarah Burgess
Director of Curriculum and Instruction
YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School

[Link to Sarah Burgess' letter](#)

November 2, 2020

To Whom It May Concern,

I have known Anthony Smith for the last 12 years. I met Anthony through work when we were in high school. He is someone I know to be very respectful, responsible, honest, and dependable.

He is someone who is not afraid to give you a helping hand when your in need. I have never seen or heard of him harming anyone or anything. Something I admire about Anthony is that he is a level headed guy, who thinks before he acts. No matter how upset he is I know him to do the right thing. He is thoughtful and kind towards others, and is much liked by his coworkers and friends.

I can confirm that in all the time I have known Anthony he is a man of integrity. I humbly request that you give Anthony Smith a second chance. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please kindly consider his situation when making your decision.

Sincerely,

Shamin Celin

Shamin Celin

To whom it may concern:

I'm writing this letter on behalf of Anthony Smith, a friend, coworker, and incredible human being. I remember when Ant started with us, he started mid year which is already a daunting task, but he jumped in with both feet, not only because he immediately cared for our students, but because service to the community (one of his largest roles as a Community Projects Coordinator) is an integral part of his life long before he came to YB. When his time as an Americorps member was coming to a close I was talking with a colleague about "what position do you think YB could create to keep Ant?" When the social studies position became available that same year I knew he was the perfect person for the job.

I've been teaching in Philadelphia for 13 years and could count on one hand the number of black male educators I've known. The impact he has as a role model for the young men in his life, from our students, to his younger brothers, to the younger Americorps members he's supported is immeasurable. His belief in the community to support each other and fight injustice is unwavering. He has had a profound impact on me as an educator and I know with all my heart that every person who has met him is better for it.

Knowing Ant hasn't made me a better person solely because his passion inspires me, his lessons teach me, and his commitment humbles me. Ant makes people better because he also brings so much joy. His laugh and smile are contagious and hearing him cheer on students at graduation is one of my favorite life experiences. He's got a nickname for everyone and claps and yells and supports every single student with boundless love and pride. I often pick on Ant for waiting until 4pm to have something to eat- but it's because he'd rather spend lunch with our young people or talking in the hallways. He is really one of the best humans I know and send him every ounce of support I can.

Sincerely,

Erika Starr Celley
Math Teacher
267.606.3415

[Link to Erika Starr Celley's letter](#)

Richard Chalme
4207 Vesper Circle
Palmyra, NJ 08065

10/29/2020

Re: Anthony Smith

To the honorable judge

I have had the pleasure and the honor of being a colleague of Anthony Smith for the last three years. I've never met an individual who can make you feel as cared about or as supported as Ant can. He respects both teachers and students and honors them in his own unique way. Quite frankly, he makes people feel valued and important. Living and working in a city where gun violence is common, people like Ant are much needed.

I can attest to the fact that Ant has made several positive contributions to the youth of Philadelphia's life. He has the skill to pull the best out of his students and make them respect their identities and strive to make the world a better place. I can honestly say that Ant has also made me a better teacher and a better person.

It is my sincere hope that you take all of my words into consideration as the Anthony Smith that I know is an individual who cares for people, loves his community, and makes the world a better place.

Sincerely,
Richard Chalme

Hello mr.Ant

Today's news comes as a complete shock to me as I sit here writing this. I'm filled with tears. But you always tell me to keep an outgoing positivity for my peers. I don't understand what they're trying to do but you're a great guy, you're so positive for your community and you taught me so much over this little time of knowing you. And I will tell somebody to don't judge you for your actions because you have a positive heart and I could never see you do any of these things. But enough that more on you When I walked into YB. I know you want to be in your classroom right now teaching your students and watching us grow day by day . Thank you for all the hard work and dedication. Thank you for doing your best for us and for being flexible in this unprecedented situation. Thank you for your patience with technology, your willingness to try new things and your ability to reach students even from a distance. Please know everything you're doing is appreciated and that everything you are doing is making a difference in my life and everybody's in Yb.

Dominique Chisholm

Alicia Cobb, M.Ed.
5415 Sansom Street, Apt B
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 19139

Tuesday, November 3rd, 2020

RE: Anthony Smith

Your Honor,

I have known and worked with Anthony Smith since 2015 where we worked as Americorps college and career advocates in The School District of Philadelphia. Since 2016 when the program ended, Ant and I have maintained both a professional and personal relationship. I am proud to call Ant one of my best and most valued friends. His contribution to his community, his friendships and his work as an activists educator and advocate reflect his belief in a better future for all of those around him. Me and Ant talked daily over text speaking about heavy topics like education in Philadelphia, politics, activism, and self-care to more light-hearted topics like cartoons, video games and funny pictures and video.

As a therapist and overnight worker, I would often ask Ant, "How are you? How are you holding up? Did you sleep today?" when I saw he was up at 4am preparing lesson plans, or preparing breakfast for his little brother. Ant would often put others before himself, even if doing so would interfere with eating, sleeping or having alone time. It bothered me that he didn't prioritize himself at all. It was exhausting for me hearing about how exhausting his work was. Anthony taking the time for something as small as a nap or playing a video game by himself to me was a call for celebration.

In 2017, more than a year after Ant and I had worked together full-time, I needed a very serious and sudden major operation that easily could have been life or death for me. The hospital I was staying in was outside of the city of Philadelphia and I expected that many family and friends would not have made it there. With no notification, Anthony showed up at my side in the hospital and sat with me for several hours talking about video games and cartoons-something that kept my mind off the grim feeling of several of my body parts not being a part of me anymore because of the operation. He hadn't told me he was coming, let alone asked for the hospital's address or if visitation was even allowed.

One of Ant's usernames on social media is OneVillageAnt (One Village Ant). And I am only realizing as I write this that those words perfectly reflect Ant's values, his pedagogy and how he navigates all of his interpersonal relationships and work. His work with all people is what gives Ant the purpose and the drive to skip a meal, a nap, or even a minute to himself for the sake of someone else. Keeping Anthony locked away is not only a tremendous interruption in that work, but it puts a hole in his family, his friends, the West Philadelphia community, and the city of Philadelphia.

Sincerely,

Alicia Cobb

October 29, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

I write in strong support on behalf of Anthony Smith. I have known Anthony for three and a half years in the context of YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School, where we work together as teachers and mentors with young people. This year we are on the same teaching team, and work closely together.

Anthony is one of the finest human beings and educators I know. He is caring and deeply principled, as well as respectful and hardworking. In his work with students Anthony demonstrates a huge capacity for developing strong relationships with students and supporting them in their work toward their goals. I assist in Anthony's first period class, and so I have a first-hand opportunity to be with him in his work as a teacher. Anthony is a diligent and highly effective practitioner who nurtures his students in developing their critical capacities, research skills, and communications skills. Anthony is an excellent role model for students, and he is also humble and focused on doing his work in the interest of the greater good. He believes in the power of community to love and support each other, and he lives this belief every day.

It is a pleasure and an honor to know and work with Anthony. I speak here as strongly as possible on Anthony's behalf. His integrity, compassion, and ability to relate to all kinds of people make him a man of truly admirable character, an invaluable asset to our community and our world.

Please let me know if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,

Jody Cohen, Ph.D

YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School

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Concern,

Richard Collins
203 Jackson Ave
Collingdale PA 19023
10/30/2020

To whom this may concern

I have known Anthony Smith as a good friend since we were children for over ten years. I was both shocked and uphaled to hear of his recent situation for he has always been a level - headed calm and collected person. It is for this reason that I am writing a letter on the character of my good friend Anthony Smith. I understand the seriousness of this matter and hope that the court may show some leniency.

Since we were children Anthony always put others before him and he has always been there for me Anthony gave me a job showing tremendous support in my time of need and never asked for anything in return. He has truly been a blessing to me over the years.

I knew Anthony before he made a name for himself as a West Philadelphia activist I could see at an early age he was always destined to do this type of work, a speaker for the people a community builder and an all-around Ginuwine person.

It is with my sincere hope that the court will take this letter into consideration and provide leniency towards Anthony Smith and as a result of this situation he will come out of this a better person than before.

To Whom it may Concern,

In my short time working with Mr. Ant I could tell that he was different. Prior to the current events, I did not know about his activism in the community. Mr. Ant does not promote his work in the community like a badge of honor to be displayed for everyone to see. Yet, when I see him in the classroom interacting and engaging with some of Philadelphia's disadvantaged youth and colleagues, his passion for people stands out. His approach of compassion, understanding and genuine love of service is amazing. This isn't just a job for Mr. Ant, it is a purpose. It is a purpose derived from the want to ensure that all people have an opportunity to succeed in life. I look forward to seeing Mr. Ant back in the classroom serving the people who need him most, Philadelphia's Disadvantaged Youth.

#FreeAnt

Phil Cook
Senior Accountant (267) 318-
1009
pcook@youthbuildphilly.org

Concern,

To whom it may Concern,

My name is Andrew Dalke and I am writing a letter of support on behalf of Anthony Smith. Having spent countless hours together with Anthony at YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School as Community Project Coordinators, I had the pleasure of getting to know him and his character. At YouthBuild, we worked together to plan and carry out projects for the local community such as repainting schools, handing out care packages to people experiencing homelessness, cleaning up city blocks, and organizing community health fairs to name a few.

Throughout this time, I recognized Anthony's immeasurable love for his community and the people that comprise it. He worked tirelessly to create opportunities and resources for others, while simultaneously helping students with whatever issues they were navigating. On any given day, he would do whatever he could to have a positive impact on those around him. One day while working on building planter boxes for a local community garden, he deftly multitasked between assisting a student in search of emergency housing and helping nail lumber together, then transitioned into helping craft community-based curriculum after work hours had already ended and he had already put in over eight hours of manual and mental labor. He executed this heavy workload seamlessly and with an energy only possible through a deep love for those around him. Such displays of almost inhuman effort are commonplace for Anthony, and were not limited to work. He would often head out after long days at YouthBuild and go serve food to those in the community or help organize coat drives for financially disadvantaged youth. His character and passion for community are something that I have taken to heart and he serves as a personal role model that epitomizes what it means to live a life guided by care, concern, and respect for one's community and environment. For example, Anthony routinely went out of his way and dug into his own pockets to make sure students were able to get food for lunch. The consistency with which he makes personal sacrifices to ensure the well-being of those around him is inspiring to say the least. Whenever a student or staff member was in a pinch, we could always count on Anthony and his dependability for support. For reasons such as this, Anthony continually maintains excellent relationships with students and staff alike and brings immeasurable and irreplaceable value to the spaces he is in.

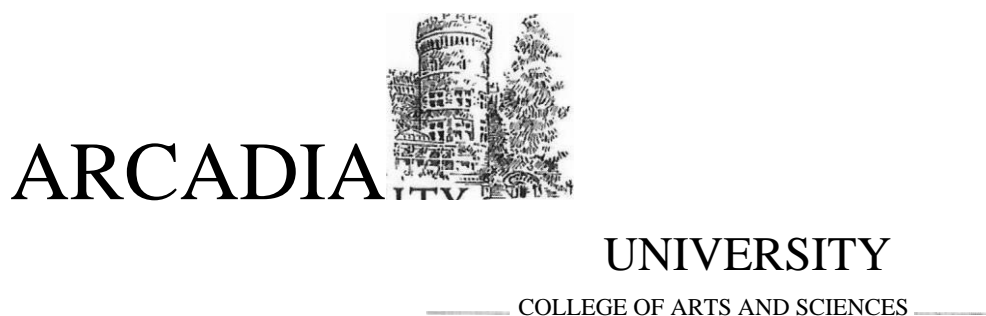
Anthony possesses a work ethic that is second to none. Anthony often is the last person to leave YouthBuild, exiting the building at 8pm or later not due to his own fatigue, but rather due to the maintenance technicians' need to close down the building. He then comes back to work early the next morning, before most other staff arrive. Anthony continually pushes the bar higher and higher when it comes to the dedication and hard work he puts into his teaching. Whenever I needed someone to help with an after-school service project, I could depend on Ant if no one else to stay late and spend the extra hours with students and myself (without pay) working on bookshelves for local elementary schools or whatever other project I happened to be engaged in. He never seems to stop thinking about how he can be the best community member possible and then putting in the raw effort to reify his conceptual work into tangible products. For example, Anthony transitioned from being a Community Projects Coordinator into his current role as Social

Studies teacher during my 2nd year at YouthBuild. During this time, I saw Anthony's amazing ability to take in real-time feedback and constructive criticism, problem solve, and implement improvements in his curriculum and teaching by the next class period. He would then stay late, further honing in his craft and developing lessons that were highly attuned to the needs of students and their preferred learning styles. Through conversations with Anthony, I came to understand that this work ethic is not rooted in his own personal aspirations, but rather in his desire to be at his best so that others, staff and students alike, may get the most out of their interactions with him. His continued devotion to growth through hard work again serves as a constant reminder in my own work of what it means to be committed to one's craft so that others around yourself may benefit from it.

While working with Anthony, I was also struck by his demeanor. While he continues to be the recipient of high praises from those around him, his disposition remains the same. Anthony remains focused on his community, as opposed to his own status and successes. For example, when he received an award as YouthBuild National AmeriCorps Member of the Year, he was prodded into giving a speech at a staff meeting. He took this opportunity to highlight the work of other staff members and to thank everyone else in the room, while not mentioning himself or the award once. Such humbleness is evident in his teachings as well, wherein he doesn't impose what he knows on students so much as he encourages students to critically assess their own positions and develop a set of beliefs and reasoning that makes sense from their own perspective. Whether or not another person's views line up with his own, he gives them the same guidance and refuses to make matters about his own personal beliefs. He helps develop an ability for self-determination and critical thinking in everyone around him, which from my viewpoint is the essence of what it means to teach. This ability of his is entirely dependent on his own selflessness and commitment to the idea of the greater good. This continual elevation of community and care for others above his own ego is what makes Anthony such an incredible force to be around and makes me thankful for the opportunities I had to learn and grow with him during our time working together.

Anthony is a beloved member of his community and is the rare kind of individual who makes a positive impact on the lives of those around him. It is safe to say that, without Anthony, I would not be the person I am today. He continually inspires those around him to be the best version of themselves and serves as a testament to the positive effects that a teacher can have on our society. He serves as a Northern Star for many, myself included, and reaffirms my faith in the power of community and what is possible when we all strive to grow in a positive direction as individuals and as a collective. I have the utmost respect for Anthony and believe that myself and many others are better off having had the privilege of getting to know him. His presence is irreplaceable and the community is better off when he is around.

Sincerely,
Andrew Dalke



Your Honor,

On account of our small class and cohort sizes, the Department of Media and Communication at Arcadia University is able to offer personal attention to all of its students. As a result, our faculty are able to develop a deeper familiarity with students' work, and a clearer sense of students' personal character than is possible in many institutions of higher education. Thus, even though he graduated several years ago, multiple members of the faculty remembered Anthony Smith when he was named by local media as one of the city's most influential citizens. And it is for the same reason that, upon becoming aware of the serious charges against Anthony, that members of the Department of Media and Communication immediately wished to collectively write to express our endorsement of his sense of social responsibility and good judgment.

Anthony was a student at Arcadia from 2010 to 2014, when he graduated, with honors, with a BA majoring in Art and a minor in Communications. He was a strong student (he earned grades of B or higher in every course in our program). However, he was best known (among faculty and among his peers) for his generosity, good attitude, and hard work. In the research writing course for our department, for example, he worked with a diverse group to produce a multimedia publication that reviewed intercultural connections in media—from cooking shows to pop music. In our visual cultural seminar, he served as an effective group leader in a project on Orientalism and media representations of the "Other." In both of these projects, Anthony contributed to the success of his groups not only on the strength of his individual intellectual and creative abilities, but more importantly through his ability to motivate, cooperate with, and be accountable to his fellow students, of all backgrounds, abilities, and personalities. These qualities are, no doubt, why so many of our successful alumni still call Anthony a friend, and part of the reason why he has been such a valued teacher and community leader in Philadelphia.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide any helpful information about our experiences with Anthony Smith.

Three handwritten signatures in black ink are displayed horizontally. The first signature on the left is cursive and appears to be "Craig". The middle signature is also cursive and appears to be "Michael D. D...". The signature on the right is cursive and appears to be "Sarah".

Michael D. Dwyer, Ph.D

Lisa Holderman, Ph.D

COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

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Moriah Diethorn 600 Old Street Rd, APT C211
Feasterville-Trevose, PA 19053
moriahdiethorn@gmail.com | (908) 216-2354
November 2nd, 2020

RE: Anthony Smith

Your Honor,

I am an Arcadia University alumni who graduated with Anthony Smith in 2014. Given the charges he is facing, I feel compelled to reach out and describe my personal experience knowing Anthony during our years together at Arcadia University.

Anthony graduated with an art and design degree. I was an art major too, and we had several classes together throughout our four years at university. Arcadia is a small college, so I found myself in the same circle of friends as Mr. Smith as well. During those four years, I grew to know Anthony and can truly say he was one of a handful of notably thoughtful and motivated students. When students are in class together day in and day out, they often see the idiosyncrasies and shortcomings of people around them. And it's true, I saw shortcomings and bad habits in myself and many others. Some students were tardy to class. Some didn't take college seriously. Some people made poor decisions and got into trouble. Some even dropped out before I could truly befriend them.

However, Anthony did none of those things. He was thoughtful, soft-spoken, and dedicated to earning his degree. It's not often I can recall classmates that were so consistent in their reliability and work ethic, yet Anthony was one of those characters. He worked diligently, was kind to everyone, and graduated successfully alongside his peers. Even outside of class he had a calm, measured presence. He was kinder and more open than most people, and got along with everyone I knew.

Looking back, I now understand that his diligence and work ethic came from knowing just how important his education was. To be frank, I was simply not as good a student as him. I didn't have any greater concept of who I was, or what I was doing there. Like many people in my circle, college was a way to explore my interests while still being supported by my parents. But I believe Mr. Smith knew better than most of us. Anthony knew that his future relied on his graduation, and he worked hard to earn it. He was able to be more responsible and think farther ahead than his peers. Today he is still thinking ahead; he's had the remarkable foresight to teach, nurture, and peacefully support the inner strength of others in a time when so many of us feel helpless. He is a unique and bright individual, and I'm thankful to have known and experienced his welcoming presence and good nature. I thank you graciously for taking the time to read this letter and hope it will aid you in your decision.

Sincerely,

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Ant Smith. I have known Ant for four years in my role as math instructor at YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School. In his time as YouthBuild first as an AmeriCorps member and then a social studies teacher he has been a consistently positive, productive, and supportive educator and leader in our school community.

Ant always leads with love and support - for students, colleagues, and community. I feel his love and support when he never passes me in the hallway without a warm greeting and an authentic check-in to make sure I'm good. I feel it when I enter his classroom (in person and virtually) and see students deeply engaged in discussion, learning, and action. I see it in his lesson plans and teaching - supporting young people in understanding, researching, and advocating for issues that impact themselves and their communities. I see it when he stands outside for hours at prom arrivals every year and he cheers for, recognizes, and celebrates each student and their achievements. I see it in academic team meetings, when he centers students' voices and best interests in our conversations and decision making. I feel it when he leads restorative circles to support students in building and maintaining positive relationships.

Ant is a teacher, leader, advocate, colleague, mentor, friend, and an integral part of the YouthBuild community. He demonstrates his care for individuals and community every day through words and actions.

If you need any additional information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Rebekah Dommel

Math Instructor

YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School

267-934-9528

[Link to Rebekah Dommel's letter](#)



American Friends
Service Committee

November 1st, 2020

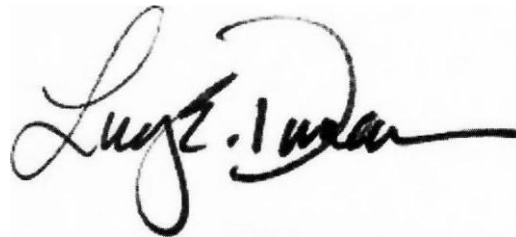
To whom it may concern,

I am a Quaker and work for AFSC as an organizer, trainer, and blogger to connect our work to the Quaker community. I have known Anthony Smith for about six years. I got to know him by hosting monthly Philly REAL Justice organizing meetings and Town Halls at Friends Center on behalf of AFSC and occasionally participating in their activities. Anthony is one of the most principled, loving, caring people I know. Whether in leading a meeting or facilitating a training session, I have experienced him to be responsive, gentle, able to make room for many voices, and always putting the care of the community first. He shows up day to day in consistent, loving, and clear-eyed ways.

He is a person who keeps his word, consistently. Having worked with him in the past six years in holding space, he has consistently been kind, open and responsive.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.

In Peace,



Lucy E. Duncan

Director of Friends Relations
1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102 Ph:
215-241-7062

My name is Saudia Durrant and I am writing this letter to share some brief words on the powerful impact community organizer and advocate, Ant Smith, has had, not just on me, but also on a number of often under-supported and under-recognized communities in Philadelphia, particularly youth. And to share that all of us who have benefited greatly from his leadership are feeling the severe void without his presence, due to the current charges brought against him.

The charges that Ant Smith feel faces are the complete opposite of what he has demonstrated and provided to young people, and to other organizers like myself, who have been completely inspired and motivated to get involved in working to increase love and sustainability in our city.

I first met Ant Smith, very briefly at a community event, I was invited to speak at to share stories of young people who I work with in Philly public schools, who often feel disempowered through systemic inequalities they experience every day in the School District of Philadelphia. I was extremely nervous and unsure of myself speaking in front of a large audience, and I'm not sure if that was noticeable, but right before going up Ant said "You got this," and fist bumped me while going up with all the reassurance that I was around nothing but support! I really appreciated this experience, because in this year alone, it's become increasingly difficult to find environments of support and camaraderie with so many tragic things happening.

And although this was just a brief, polite gesture, it motivated me to continue attending more community events, where I would meet more people similar to Ant, who all welcomed me genuinely with open arms to join teach ins and community service work to give back to communities who have lost so much from all the devastation in this year. The more events I started attending this summer, the more I felt a real sense of family with other neighbors and volunteers all brought together around a common goal: the desire to fully transform and heal the traumas our communities have seen worsen through this pandemic; a goal that would not be clearly understood as necessary without the instrumental leadership to bring folks together that Ant has fully demonstrated with his commitment.

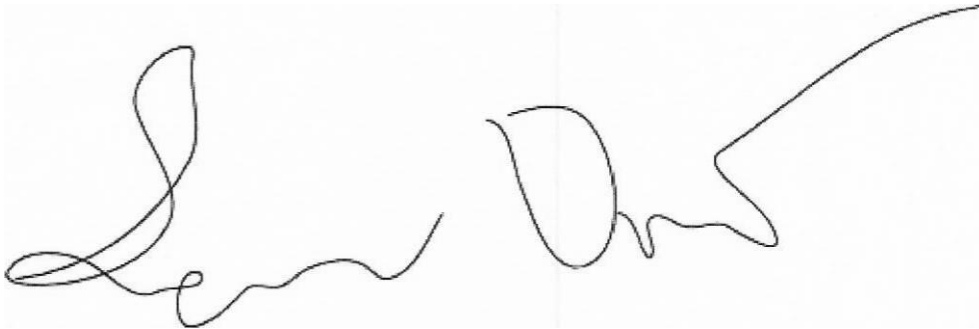
In addition, to encounters like this work, Ant has also had a powerful impact on the students I work with, by speaking at events we hosted with and for young people, all throughout this summer, empowering our high school students to continue in advocating for more guidance counselors, educators, and other vital school support staff brought into schools, so young people can have mentors to look up to, whom they will one day feel the seats for.

It's very disturbing and confusing and scary to see someone who has given so much to his community, also be violently removed from that community, for charges that do not align with his great character.

It feels very imperative that Ant Smith is allowed to continue this tremendous work he does, because our young people need to see themselves reflected in educators, advocates, volunteers, and healers of today, who are committed to deep systemic improvements to our city. I truly hope that the decision made regarding Ant's future denounces the charges made against him, because his character has proven to be one invested in healing and protecting communities and their resources, not damaging them. Our young people are depending on him.

Sincerely,

Saudia Durrant

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light gray background. The signature is cursive and stylized, appearing to read 'Saudia Durrant'. It features a large, looped initial 'S' followed by a series of connected, fluid strokes that form the rest of the name. The signature is positioned below the printed name 'Saudia Durrant'.

Your Honor,

I met Ant Smith during my freshman year at Arcadia University, and the positivity and warmth he brought to my life during that time is something I haven't forgotten. Although I left to go to another school, I've stayed up to date with Ant's efforts over the years to make Philly a better place. I've seen him grow as a leader, educator, and voice for those in need. During the time that I knew him at Arcadia, Ant was a constant source of laughter and perspective, bringing in those around him. I see all of these things in the work that he does today. Ant is a pillar of his community, and I believe this is because so many have seen what I, and many other classmates saw during the time I spent with him.

Sincerely,

Brian Ecklund

484-620-0450

November 2, 2020

RE: Anthony Smith

Your Honor,

When the phrase "quality of character" comes to mind, I think of a handful of people that I've known in my life and one of those people in that handful is without a doubt Anthony Smith. I had the privilege of taking a number of classes with Anthony "Ant" Smith at Arcadia University. Ant consistently brought a positive attitude to the classroom, gave peer support and constructive criticism, led by a stellar example and was just all around wonderful to be around. Ant was and continues to be one of the most inspiring, intelligent, and humble people I have the honor of knowing as a friend. Watching Anthony continue to blossom over the years as a sincere-hearted friend and organizer of under-privileged communities has given me so much hope and I know I

can speak for his friends in similar regards. We are in awe of his resilience and caring heart. To have Anthony locked away in any capacity, his brilliant light unable to shine on his friends and community, would be an unspeakable travesty. As an educator who loves what I do, it has been abundantly clear in hearing Ant speak of his own students, that Anthony is so full of heart and definitely doing the work that the world needs so desperately in these trying times. Watching Anthony share about his interactions and projects with his young students, you can see the student's sincere respect for this man - there is a warmth, camaraderie and mutual admiration between them that is palpable, so rare and such a blessing to them both. As an educator of young students, I can only hope to be of the caliber of teacher Anthony Smith is. Anthony is a rarity these days— "a real one" as people say; wholesome, committed to being a lifelong learner and teacher, true in his intentions and sincere in his vision for a better world; a treasure to his friends and to the community. He cares with his whole heart about anyone who may lack a voice or proper care and that is clear to anyone who knows him. I mean these words from the bottom of my heart. Please let Anthony Smith's light keep shining on the world.

Sincerely,

Heidi Forney

Diana Funk
10 Station Lane
Merchantville, NJ 08109

November 1, 2020

RE: Anthony Smith

Your Honor,

I met Anthony Smith (Ant) at Arcadia University, where I took countless communication, art history, and graphic design courses alongside him.

As is customary for art majors, we spent endless hours in the "Mac lab" working on design projects until late into the night. We were often the ones trying to finish things up at the last hour before our morning classes, because we had such heavy course loads. Ant was a true philomath: he filled his schedule with classes, ranging from history and Chinese to communications and art. In fact, he graduated a semester behind the rest of us, because of the broad depth of his interests. I remember him telling me about his Jamaican roots, his family, growing up in Southwest Philly, and his travels in China.

At the time, I had recently moved out of my very White, very homogenous bubble of South Jersey. To say my viewpoints were limited is a severe understatement. One of the experiences I now cringe to remember is how, during many late night chats, Ant would speak to me about his experience with racial injustice. I would ask him question after question about my own role in racism and prejudice. He stood patiently, listening while I repeatedly stuck my foot in my mouth. Ant was an incredibly patient and kind person, who valued these types of personal conversations.

Aside from these chats, during normal class hours, Ant was the type of person who made the air feel lighter when he entered a room. His positive energy and outlook were contagious. He was simply one of those people who would talk to anyone, be friends with anyone—the kind of person who made everyone feel special.

I haven't seen Ant regularly in years—with the exception of running into him once or twice in the city--but even so, if I send him a message, he's quick to respond. He is beyond dedicated to connections and community. He cares deeply about leaving a better life for his neighbors than the one into which he was born. As I'm sure you'll hear, he volunteers his time to many organizations: Food Not Bombs, North Philly Peace Park, YouthBuild, and Philly REAL Justice. It is clear to me that Philadelphia would be left in a worse place without Ant.

I hope this letter, the countless others, and the well-documented accolades and successes of Ant Smith inspire you to make a fair decision on this case.

Sincerely,
Diana Funk

Tina Furr

726 Tasker Street, Apt 1

Philadelphia, PA 19148 November 2,

2020

Re: Anthony Smith

Your Honor,

My name is Tina Furr. I'm a Philadelphia native, and I am the Individual Giving Associate for the National Network of Abortion Funds. I've worked in reproductive health and rights for 5 years. I've known Anthony Smith for 4 years and I was deeply saddened at the news of Anthony's charges as they do not reflect who I know him to be.

During the summer of 2016, I reached out to Anthony because he appeared so genuine in every passing interaction I had with him and we had mutual friends. When attempting to find a time to meet for coffee, Anthony was often so busy with his volunteer work, it was actually hard to find a date and time. His dedication to the Philadelphia community is unmatched. Eventually, and over time, we got to know one another. I began frequently running into him on my way to work and, without fail, even if he was running late, Anthony would stop to ask how I'm doing and if I needed anything. Anthony has a way of making sure people feel truly cared for. I think it is the teacher's quality in him. His students are so lucky to have such a caring person as a mentor. He is simply humble and selfless. We've gone dancing together and shared pizzas. Not only is he brilliant, he is incredibly funny and a talented artist. I have incredible respect for Anthony as an educator, family member, and friend.

It is my sincere hope you take this letter into consideration to attest to Anthony's character as a loving and much needed member of our community.

Sincerely,'

Tina Furr

To Whom It May

Concern,

I am writing this letter of support to you today for my friend and fellow organizer, Anthony Smith. I moved to Philadelphia three years ago and in my time working with the community I have seen very few people as integral to this work as Ant is. He is smart and kind and gentle and fair and to say he is beloved is not an exaggeration. Ant doesn't simply have ties to his community, he is a glue within it. He is the loudest supporter, most level-headed mediator, and one of the most widely liked humans I've ever met. If you notice a pattern of accolades between these letters of support, know that it is because I know of not one single person he has ever even met who disliked him. Any age, any education-level, any class, any race, any gender-- there is not a single demographic that Ant does not fit in with.

Out of our close friend group, I am one of the newer members and so I think I have one of the best abilities to comment on Ant as both someone who loves him and someone who has a more objective view of his impact on the people he interacts with and to put it succinctly: Ant is our joy and he is our calm. He finds a way to do everything and be everywhere at once, supporting everyone in his life in whatever they need. It's magic to see how everyone's face lights up when he is in the room, even if the topic of community work for the day is difficult. I have no idea how he does it and I suspect it's often at the expense of himself and his needs. Even now, I know that as much as we're working to support him in this incredibly difficult situation, he's going to think of his loved ones here before his needs when he communicates with them. I know that we feel broken without him here when it is the duty of this system to heal communities, not tear them apart. Ant is part of that healing and he deserves, we all deserve, to have him with us as we attempt to make sure that for once, he is taken care of the way he takes care of us.

I implore anyone who reads this to help us get our man back. It is my birthday today and my only wish is for him to be home with us to celebrate. Please grant us that.

With my unending support,
Arika Gold-Bustos

November 1, 2020

From: Devon Gooden
6226 Carpenter St.
Philadelphia, Pa 19143

Subject: Character letter of Anthony Smith

To whom it may concern:

My name is Devon Gooden. I am the cousin of Anthony Smith. I have known him all his life and this makes me qualified to speak fondly of him and disseminate to the world just who Anthony Smith is.

Throughout his brief journey, you can find and describe Anthony as quiet and subdued, humble and kind, cool like no other. He is never in the company of raucous and disorderly friends or acquaintances. He is a seeker of wisdom. He is always reading; wanting to be knowledgeable about every facet of life. He is undeniably aware, focused and full of understanding of life and its many opportunities. He also lives in deep comprehension of the many pitfalls of this society and stays away from the many cliffs of temptation and tribulation. He is a deeply conscious young man.

Anthony does not associate with individuals causing disorder, burning or looting of any sort. He is a young man who spends his time volunteering to feed the homeless. Every Friday of any week you can find him handing out meals to those who are less fortunate. Anthony constantly volunteers to better his community.


I know Anthony to be dependable, quiet, honest and courteous. His character is that of a strong silent river, straight and steady, heading in all the right directions. All who are within his biosphere are free to quench their thirst from his kindness and philanthropic generosity. He is ever giving and truthful. His gifts are intentional, unrestricted, free of cost with nothing expected in return.

He assists and counsels troubled youths on a daily basis. His students meet him on the EL Train just to search out his directions and virtuous advice. He often meets with other students who are troubled to tutor them in their academic pursuits. He counsels them from suicidal thoughts and contemplations. He is a good and genuine person.

Anthony Smith is blameless and wholesome. He possesses a spirit of respect and decency. He is an upright citizen of the Philadelphia community: He sacrifices his time and energy into Philadelphia and is worthy of nothing less than the same veneration, admirable courtesy, esteem and reverence bestowed upon diplomats and peacekeepers. He is unpolluted in his duties to this community. Anthony is orderly and immaculate, pure and wholesome.

I can speak boldly on behalf of Anthony Smith and certify his spotless character to be nothing less than uncontaminated, outstanding and clean.

Sincerely,


Devon Gooden
Cousin

We Concur:
Romeo L. Smith - Father
Sylvia Smith - Mother
Vanilla Smith - Stepmom
Grandmother
Oshane Grant - Nephew
Conrad Smith - Grandfather
Hyon Brown - Nephew
Robert Smith - Uncle
Sandra Dickerson - Aunt